



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

**DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNANCE
THEMATIC TRUST
FUND**

UNDP: A world of development experience

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build better lives.

The organisation is on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacities, they draw on the people of UNDP and its wide range of partners.

At the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders put development at the heart of the global agenda by adopting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015. Since then, UNDP has used its global network to help the UN system and its partners raise awareness of the MDGs and track progress, while connecting countries to the knowledge and resources needed to achieve these goals.

UNDP's substantive focus is in helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of:

- Democratic Governance
- Poverty Reduction
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery
- Energy and Environment
- Information and Communications Technology
- HIV/AIDS

UNDP helps developing countries attract and use aid effectively. In all its activities, the organisation encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women.



UNDP DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC TRUST FUND

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“Oppression is not
an alternative to poverty.
Nor is development an alternative
to freedom. Poverty and oppression
go hand in hand, while true development
means freedom from both. No State can
truly be called democratic if it offers
its people no escape from poverty;
and no country can truly develop,
so long as its people are
excluded from power.”

**Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations
Address to the Fourth International
Conference of New and Restored Democracies
in Cotonou, Benin (4 December 2000)**

The DGTTF is designed to foster innovation through the funding of original, dynamic and catalytic governance projects implemented at the country office level.

WHAT IS THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC TRUST FUND?

Established in 2001, the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) is now in its third year of operation. It is managed by the Democratic Governance Group (DGG) in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (BDP).

Through the DGTTF, UNDP is putting emphasis on six service lines in order to meet the challenges of strengthening democratic governance and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. DGTTF's specificity is to foster innovation through the funding of original, dynamic and catalytic governance projects implemented at the country office level.

FUNDING

The Fund is a flexible and responsive co-financing modality, designed specifically for rapid approval and swift disbursement of funds at the country level. It enables donors to earmark contributions for democratic governance projects that will be implemented in during each year. Since its creation, DGTTF's principal donors have been Norway, the Netherlands, Germany and Finland.

HOW DOES A COUNTRY GET FUNDED ?

Any UNDP country office can receive a request from its national counterparts and apply for funding under the DGTTF. The application process entails submitting a one-page "Expression of Interest" (EoI), which describes the nature of the project, what it intends to achieve and the funds needed to do so. In December of each year,

projects are selected according to the Fund's guidelines, at which point country offices submit their project documents and budgets and begin disbursing the funds they have been granted. Funded projects must be implemented with one calendar year.



Women participate in making governance decisions at a village meeting in Nepal. (Cover photo: UNDP/Nepal, 26 October 2001)

WHAT ARE THE AREAS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE?

Given the challenges of strengthening democratic governance, UNDP places emphasis on six service lines through the DGTTF:

- Parliamentary Development;
- Electoral Systems and Process;
- Access to Justice and Human Rights;
- Access to Information and E-Governance;
- Decentralisation, Local Governance and Urban/Rural Development; and
- Public Administration Reform and Anti-Corruption.

ALLOCATIONS

Since 2001, more than 280 innovative governance projects have been funded through the DGTTF.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS			
	2002	2003	2004
Allocations (USD)	15,317,000	13,717,000	7,400,000
Number of projects funded	97	99	84

PERCENTAGE OF FUNDS ALLOCATED BY COUNTRY CATEGORY			
	2002	2003	2004
Least developed countries (LDCs) and Africa	54.7%	55.7%	54%
Low-income countries (LICs)	6.9%	11.5%	6%
Non-LDC or Africa	38.4%	32.8%	30%

“One of the most important lessons of the last two decades is that democratic governance is the glue that holds all other development priorities set out across the Millennium Development Goals together.”

**Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator,
United Nations Development Programme**

- **The United Nations Millennium Declaration represents the strongest unanimous and explicit statement to date of UN member states in support of democratic and participatory governance.** The declaration clearly articulates that the Millennium Development Goals must be achieved through good governance within each country and at the international level. Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator, reaffirmed it during the 2003 Global Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator Meeting:¹ “One of the most important lessons of the last two decades is that democratic governance is the glue that holds all other development priorities set out across the MDGs together.”
- As recently as the late seventies, there were only 40 countries that had a democratic system of government. Today, over 120 nations, with two-thirds of the world population, are engaged in building democratic societies, and many have made impressive progress.

1. Mark Malloch Brown, Global Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator Meeting, 6 October 2003, Tarrytown, USA

However, **challenges remain: weak participation, threatened freedoms, deficient public services and administration, corruption, lack of accountability and instability still menace to dismantle the hard fought democratic gains.** Therefore, the progress of accountability and participation in developing countries will, in turn, be a major factor in whether these countries meet other development goals.

- Poverty is the most serious threat to democratic governance, as much as **growth with equity is the major democratic success.** Where social progress has accompanied new or restored democracies, popular support and institutional legitimacy have given deep roots to public freedoms. Poor democracies, on the other hand, suffer from instability and people's indifference, surviving in a state of extreme fragility.
- **Progress in democracy is closely linked to progress in protecting human rights — and that, too, is an unfinished business.** While most domestic legal systems now recognise international norms, implementation has been uneven. For instance, in many places, judges still lack independence, police lacks professional training and ordinary citizens remain unaware of their fundamental rights.
- Despite the fact that over 160 countries have ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, **women are still under-represented at all levels of decision-making.** Globally, two-thirds of political parties have no women in their governing bodies.
- **Finally, globalisation poses an additional challenge for many emerging democracies,** which makes the close collaboration between international agencies, NGOs, civil society and the private sector all the more important when promoting and supporting democratic governance.

UNDP AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

“Democracy as we see it is a set of principles and core values that allow people to gain power through participation while protecting them from arbitrary, unaccountable action by governments, multinational corporations and other forces. Politics is as important to successful development as economics.”

Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator,
Human Development Report, UNDP, 2002

THE CHALLENGE OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM: STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The 1990s brought a wave of democratic governance reforms. At the Millennium Summit, the world's leaders resolved to “spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.”

Improving the quality of democratic institutions and processes, and managing the changing roles of the state and civil society in an increasingly globalised world, must underpin national efforts to reduce poverty, sustain the environment and promote human development.

Several fields within democratic governance are relatively new to the international community, and ad hoc interventions often take priority over evaluation and analysis. UNDP offers development partners an opportunity to help support best practices and advance a body of information and knowledge that promotes effective and sustained assistance in the area.



Football players Ronaldo and Zinedine Zidane have teamed up with the United Nations Development Programme in a communications campaign entitled “Teams to End Poverty.” (Photo: Dominique Issermann)

“A country has not to be judged fit for democracy, rather it has to become fit through democracy.”

Amartya Sen,
Human Development Report, 2002

UNDP'S NICHE AND STRENGTH IN SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

UNDP's niche is well established. As UNDP's Administrator, Mark Malloch Brown, states it:² “For UNDP, [governance] remains the area where we have our greatest skills and comparative advantages, and where we have, overall, the fastest growing demand from programme countries.”

For the past several years, the bulk of the organisation's resources — and results — has been in supporting good governance. Thanks to UNDP's network of 166 country offices and its partnerships in this field through the Resident Coordinator system, no organisation has a wider reach. **More countries than ever before are working to build democratic governance.** Their challenge is to develop institutions and processes that are more responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens, including the poor.

UNDP's approach to support democratic governance begins with the trust of national governments.

UNDP's asset is to be seen as a partner rather than an adversary. As a result, UNDP is often invited to play crucial coordination and resource mobilisation functions on sensitive democratic governance subjects. UNDP is the main dialogue convener in developing countries, and it plays its role with resolute impartiality, even under difficult circumstances.

2. Mark Malloch Brown, Global Resident Representative/Resident Coordinator Meeting, 6 October 2003, Tarrytown, USA

UNDP has also been a key player in advancing analytical and applied work related to the often-missing link between governance and poverty reduction. In addition, UNDP has been advocating participatory governance mechanisms at the global level, framing national issues in terms of universal human concerns. The human rights perspective leads UNDP to focus in particular on issues of gender equality, equal access, representation, participation and transparency. UNDP's global partnerships with democratic governance institutions enable the organisation to help countries access expertise and experience in priority areas of democratic reform.

In terms of partnerships, **UNDP gains great strength from its collaboration with the UN family and other organisations that offer specific governance policy services.** UNDP also works closely with specialised world-class institutions from the North and the South, including such early partners as the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Specifically, UNDP's core services to support national processes of democratic transitions focus on: (1) Policy advice and technical support; (2) Capacity development of institutions and individuals; (3) Advocacy, communications and public information; (4) Promoting and brokering dialogue; and (5) Knowledge networking and sharing of good practices.



The First Ukrainian Youth Summit was dedicated solely to the Millennium Development Goals, initiated by Ukrainian Youth and supported by the UN family in Ukraine and UNDP. (Photo: UNDP/ Ukraine)

THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC TRUST FUND (DGTTF)

The Thematic Trust Funds (TTFs) were established in 2001 as a new instrument to address UNDP's development priorities referred to as its main practice areas: Democratic Governance, Poverty Reduction, Energy and Environment, HIV/AIDS and Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

UNDP'S THEMATIC TRUST FUNDS

The Thematic Trust Funds were created for two main purposes:

- Promoting thematic focus and enhancing substantive alignment of UNDP's global, regional and country programmes around UNDP's major practice areas; and
- Mobilising non-core resources available from donors for thematic priorities as a new, quick access alternative to traditional project-by-project cost-sharing.

With these features, the TTFs have added significant new resources to UNDP's portfolio, particularly to its governance support to programme countries.

THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC TRUST FUND

The Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) is managed by the Democratic Governance Group (DGG) in UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). **Through the DGTTF, UNDP is putting emphasis on six service lines to meet the challenges of strengthening democratic governance and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.**

Relatively well funded since its creation, the DGTTF was able to begin implementation quickly and pilot many of the processes and strategic approaches implied by the Thematic Trust Fund modality. The DGTTF is now in its third year of operation. **It has successfully established itself** and is now looking towards using this new modality to its fullest extent to keep promoting and supporting UNDP's democratic governance agenda.

The strategic objectives of the DGTTF in 2002 and 2003 have been to **support the creation of the democratic governance practice, to establish the fund as a fast, flexible mechanism to provide funding for UNDP programmes, and to provide a driving force for alignment around the strategic focus of UNDP in the area of democratic governance.** The first objective has been achieved through the support for the global programmes and for strengthening the practice. Under the aegis of the Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP's governance think-tank, the democratic governance practice is elaborating several policy guidance notes called Practice Notes, because of their empirical base and practical applied knowledge. These Practice Notes are developed with the close collaboration of the Sub-Regional Facilities (SURFs) — UNDP's nine teams of lead advisers based in the field — and

Since 2001, the Democratic Governance Trust Fund has funded more than 280 innovative projects aimed at promoting democratic governance worldwide.

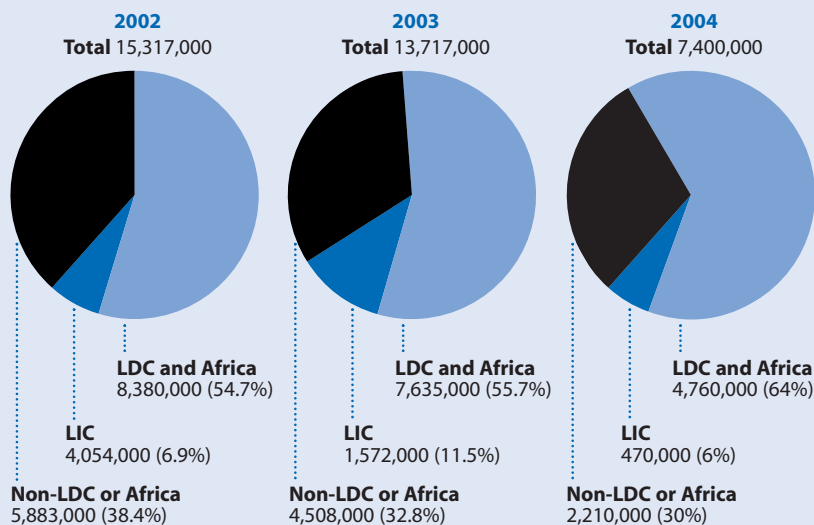
Flexibility and the ability to act rapidly can be especially important to capture the moment in politically volatile environments.

the wider circle of democratic governance practitioners throughout the world. The democratic governance practice has also promoted the learning and knowledge codification agendas through the practice network and through establishing the Oslo fellowship programmes, through sub-practice events, as well as through the annual Bergen Series in partnership with the Christian Michelsen Institute.

Finally, **the DGTTF has created new partnerships and opened new avenues for resource mobilisation.**

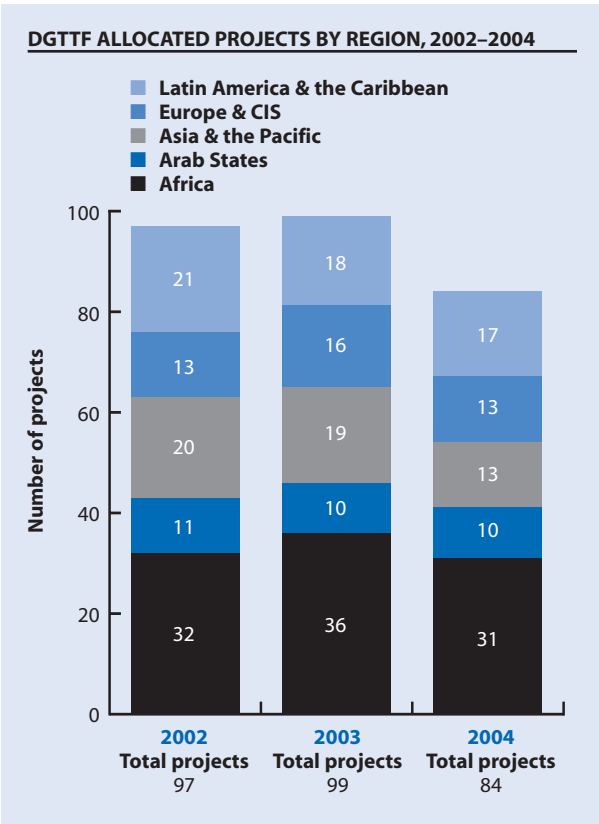
In approximately 50 percent of the countries reporting, across all service lines, DGTTF projects have resulted in additional donor resources for continuation of related activities, for example, from the European Union and the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway. In other countries, alliances and coordination with donors and international NGOs have been strengthened, as exemplified by relationships with UK Department for International Development (DFID), Organisation for Security and

DGTTF ALLOCATED PROJECTS BY COUNTRY CATEGORY, 2002–2004 (USD)



Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the US Agency for International Development, and the American Bar Association.

As per the TTF financial rules, non-earmarked contributions for a specific fund or any of its service lines are channeled through what is called the TTF “Global Window”. Within the Global Window, 70 percent of funds go to field projects and 30 percent go to projects implemented from Headquarters. **In 2003, more than 70 percent of funds have been allocated to 98 Democratic Governance projects in the field, for a total of nearly USD14 million.** From a geographical perspective, DGTTF projects have been successfully implemented in all five UNDP regions.



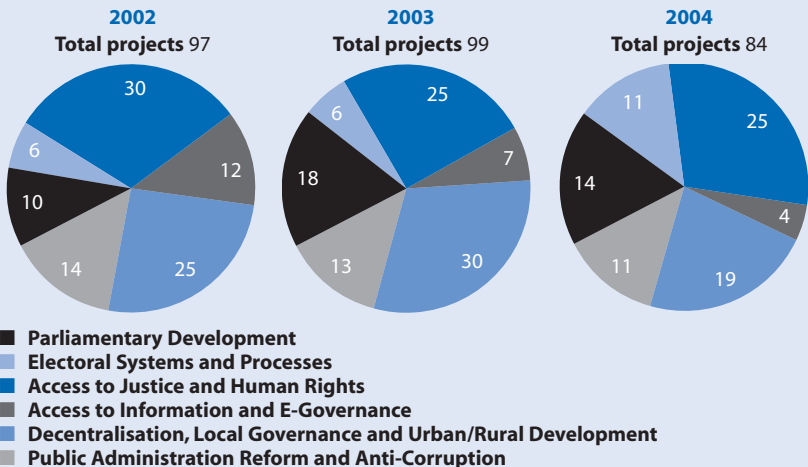
The DGTTF has been a successful tool across various types of projects in mobilising other donor resources and creating new partnerships.

COUNTRY-LEVEL SERVICES IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Given the challenges of strengthening democratic governance and meeting the Millennium Development Goals, the organisation emphasises six service lines in democratic governance to be delivered through the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund. These service lines are:

- **Parliamentary Development;**
- **Electoral Systems and Processes;**
- **Access to Justice and Human Rights;**
- **Access to Information and E-Governance;**
- **Decentralisation, Local Governance and Urban/Rural Development;** and
- **Public Administration Reform and Anti-Corruption.**

DGTF ALLOCATED PROJECTS BY SERVICE LINE, 2002–2004



SERVICE LINE: PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT



UNDP aims at ensuring fair and inclusive democratic participation by strengthening legislatures as institutions of governance. As elected governing institutions, legislatures play a critical role in channeling public participation in policy making and as venues for mediating diverse societal views. Legislatures also oversee government action, playing an important role in promoting transparent governance. Since year 2000, UNDP has received support from the Belgian Government through the Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening (GPPS).

UNDP works to strengthen legislatures' three key functions: oversight, representation and lawmaking. Activities in this area include:

- **Supporting participatory and broad-based constitutional reviews and reforms** that guarantee basic rights, freedom of association, expression and participation and protection under the law;
- **Strengthening the capacity of political parties and civil society organisations**, since they are the principle vehicles linking the electorate to legislative institutions;
- **Empowering women** through initiatives that help them reach positions of political leadership and gain access to legislative deliberations;
- **Promoting sustainable human development in legislative deliberations** through support for committees and research related to poverty issues, gender mainstreaming and budget allocations and the application of the Human Development concept to overall development management and review;

Bangladesh women discuss their new constitution during the forum for women elected to local councils. (Photo: UNDP/Bangladesh)

Support to Legislatures is an area in which UNDP can mobilise its comparative advantage especially effectively, given its particular political sensitivity.

STRENGTHENING THE NEW PARLIAMENT IN TIMOR-LESTE

Through a DGTTF funded project, support was provided to a programme to train members of the Parliamentary Secretariat and other MPs directly on their roles and responsibilities. It allowed UNDP to play a leadership role in supporting the National Parliament. The funding also allowed for technical assistance in the design of a larger comprehensive programme.

- **Strengthening the internal organisation of legislatures** by building processes and systems that will survive even after current legislators and staff retire. This includes support for the reform of parliamentary committees; and
- **Training of parliamentary members and staff** on issues related to their respective roles and responsibilities as well as professional skills development. This includes conducting orientation programmes, strengthening the functioning of committees, training in legislative drafting and establishing ongoing member and staff training capabilities.

“Parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in translating ambitious visions into concrete and measurable initiatives that will improve the lives of the people. As their representatives, they must craft laws that respond to their needs and aspirations; they must show their commitment to democracy, good governance and effective public administration; and they must serve as an institutional bridge between the state and civil society.”

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations
Message to the Parliamentarian Forum on Nepad
in Cotonou, Benin (8 October 2002)

SERVICE LINE: ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

UNDP supports electoral systems, with a strategic focus on reforms and management of electoral systems to ensure participation and enforce rules, thus assuring democratic institutions and processes.

Activities in this area include:

- **Independent and permanent electoral management bodies** with assistance for legal reform; institutional restructuring; professional development programmes; greater public information and outreach capacity; and resource management;
- **Inclusive, fair and low-cost elections** through assistance for election planning, monitoring and budgeting;



Thabang Lesibe, 74, casting his vote at Mafeteng secondary school in Lesotho. (Photo: Simon Mathebula, *St. Sunday Times*, 25 May 2002)

SUPPORT TO ELECTIONS IN TANZANIA

The DGTF has been supporting elections, the reform of the electoral system and electoral management bodies in the United Republic of Tanzania and in the island of Zanzibar. Achievements include the timely election preparation and an election process which, to the highest degree possible, has been considered free and fair and lead to national and international recognition; the provision of higher quality elections at lower costs; and an improved voters' participation and understanding of their rights and duties.

- **Civic and voter education programmes** to expand democratic participation, particularly for women and other under-represented segments of society. This includes awareness-raising activities to highlight the rights and responsibilities of citizens inherent within a democratic society; and
- **Mobilisation and coordination of resources for electoral support.** Because of the sensitivity and nature of electoral reforms, UNDP has potential to serve as conduit for third party and/or cost-sharing financial resource contributions. UNDP also helps build national capacity to manage development assistance for electoral reform and processes.

“We need to understand that there is much more to democracy than simply which candidate, or which party, has majority support. Democracy depends on the rule of law, because without respect for law it is not possible to hold free elections, to conduct them fairly, or to settle disputes about the electoral process. For an election to be truly fair, different parties and candidates should have equal access to the media.”

**Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations,
Address to the Fourth International
Conference of New and Restored Democracies
in Cotonou, Benin (4 December 2000)**

SERVICE LINE: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The goal of UNDP is to improve access to and administration of justice and to promote human rights through the mainstreaming of human rights issues in development planning processes. In the area of human rights, UNDP has rallied donor support of Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the Ford Foundation through HURIST, the joint UNDP/OHCHR global programme for human rights strengthening. In 2003, UNDP approved its Human Rights Cities Programme, an initiative that would build on the experience of the Peoples Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE) to explore a human rights-based approach to development at the grassroots level. Led by country demand, interventions under this service line include:

- **Simplifying and streamlining legal systems** to make the courts, the police, the prisons and the public registries more professional and accessible. Simplifying legal procedures and training justice sector personnel to deal appropriately with users and the media have proven effective in improving public confidence in justice institutions;
- **Strengthening national public defence systems and improving legal aid for the poor** including activities to make good legal council available and affordable to vulnerable groups such as the poor, women, minors, senior citizens, indigenous groups and prison inmates;
- **Providing legal information for judges, lawyers, prosecutors and public defenders** by making laws and judicial decisions well known among the legal community so the justice system's operators know what the rules are and what the national and international jurisprudential thinking is — particularly on complex



Ground-breaking training of Justices of the Peace, Clerks and Bailiffs to help re-establish institutions of justice in this sensitive, post-conflict period in Sierra Leone. (Photo: UNDP/Sierra Leone)

or controversial problems such as human rights, environment, bio-genetics and economic globalisation;

- **Increasing the availability of legal information to the public** to enhance citizens' awareness of rights and knowledge of how to exercise those rights;
- **Promoting alternative dispute resolution techniques and reforming informal mechanisms.** This includes non-judicial conciliation, arbitration and mediation, as well as the removal of some conduct from review by the formal justice institutions;
- **Strengthening the active participation of civil society in justice sector reform.** Included are advocacy and representation of citizen's issues, as well as institutional development of non-governmental legal aid providers, academic institutions, and training institutions for justice sector officials and the public;
- **Strengthening the capacity of programme countries to promote and protect human rights** through support to human rights policy development, advocacy, training and awareness raising, especially among women, the poor and other disadvantaged groups, the promotion of national human rights action plans and the creation and functioning of human rights institutions at national and sub-national levels.

“Human rights lie at the heart of the Millennium Development Goals. Each Goal can best be achieved when we address the rights-related issues of equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion, accountability and social justice—as well as international solidarity and cooperation... Achieving development for all is inextricably tied to justice for all, especially the world's poor.”

Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator,
International Human Rights Day Message, 2003

STRENGTHENING THE OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION IN KYRGYZSTAN

In 2003, UNDP Kyrgyzstan supported the establishment and functioning of an independent Ombudsman institution in the country through a DGTTF project. The Ombudsman's Office received assistance in the preparation of its guidelines, the design of its organisational structure and staffing table and the identification of its staff training needs. A seminar on the role and functions of the Ombudsman institution was conducted for government officials, mass media, NGOs and citizens. It contributed to a better understanding of these functions among other state bodies promoting human rights, as well as opened channels for future dialogue and communications between them. In addition, the establishment of a Resource Centre on human rights literature with UNDP support was highly appreciated not only by the Ombudsman, but also by human rights NGOs, university teachers and students, journalists and the general public.

- **Strengthening the international human rights system at the global, regional and national levels** through support to the ratification and dissemination of international human rights instruments, the effective incorporation of international human rights law in national legislation, the states' fulfillment of their reporting and other obligations under international human rights instruments, the effectiveness of the United Nations and regional human rights bodies and mechanisms and the follow-up to global human rights conferences.
- **Promoting the integration of human rights with human development** through the promotion of the human rights-based approach to development programming based on the UN System "Common Understanding" on this approach. This involves addressing the human rights-related issues of equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion, accountability and social justice, as well as international solidarity and cooperation in all phases of the development programming process.

Ensuring that development interventions are human rights based is one of the key corporate objectives for UNDP.

SERVICE LINE: ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND E-GOVERNANCE

Implementation of the right to access information and to freedom of expression are prerequisites for ensuring the voice and participation necessary for a democratic society and for sustainable poverty reduction. UNDP works with governments, a range of civil society organisations and the private sector to improve the accessibility and relevance of information and communication mechanisms for poor people. Support to the media, including community-based media, implementation of the right to official information and e-governance are key areas of this work.

In the areas of E-Governance and Access to Information, UNDP activities are designed to:

- **Strengthen the legal and regulatory environment for freedom and pluralism in information.** UNDP supports activities that facilitate the provision of expert advice on the right to official information, freedom of expression, and media law (including new and traditional media). Legal and regulatory frameworks that protect and enhance community media are especially critical for ensuring vulnerable groups' freedom of expression and access to information.

Access to Information and e-governance is a relatively new and rapidly expanding area in development, and one in which UNDP is establishing a leadership role. Because democratic governance involves public debate and open decision-making, the organisation of interest groups and the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information are essential.

- **Design and implement national e-governance strategies** to increase transparency and accountability of government operations, foster wider access to public information and promote enhanced government-citizen dialogue and interaction.
- **Elevate the professional standards of the media to promote the exchange of independent and pluralist information.** An independent and pluralist media is a crucial “institution” of governance and an important plank in poverty reduction. UNDP supports activities that encourage self-regulation (codes of conduct) and promote journalist training.
- **Support and strengthen local community and citizen’s networks at the national and local levels** through increased access to and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to promote cross-sectoral networking, access to information resources and citizen participation in local and national governance issues.
- **Raise awareness of rights to official information and strengthen mechanisms to provide and access information.** This can be achieved through supporting and facilitating initiatives that sensitise government officials on the importance of making official information available and working with civil society organisations to promote rights and entitlements under official information legislation.
- **Develop national capacity to adopt and adapt ICT and information resources,** including e-government applications, as well as indigenous and state-of-the-art knowledge resources.



Women are among the key users of UNDP’s community-based ICT access centres in Jamaica. Such centres are set up to foster increased access to information resources and networking, thus fostering participation in local governance issues. (Photo: UNDP/ Jamaica)

PUBLIC INFORMATION STRENGTHENING ON FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA

In India, the right to information was applied to food security and urban governance issues through awareness building of senior government officials. The public hearings held on food security in Kelwara and in Rajasthan, as well as on urban development expenditure in Sundarnagari and Delhi, were the first of their kind in India.

- **Strengthen communication mechanisms for vulnerable groups.** UNDP has an important role to play in strengthening communication mechanisms that allow vulnerable groups to effectively participate in policy-making processes. Examples of UNDP's role in this area include supporting community-based organisations and the media, using ICT tools to promote civic education on governance and development issues, supporting civil society organisations that focus on fostering active participation of vulnerable groups in policy-making processes such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and National Human Development Reports (NHDRs), and directly supporting community dialogue initiatives that promote social change and development.
- **Foster South-South cooperation** between national governments and with international civil society organisations by promoting and strengthening national e-governance networks.

“Neither state power nor the power of money should determine that one party gets a hearing while another is denied it. The media must actively seek out the truth on the public’s behalf, and be free to tell it as they see it.”

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations, Address to the Fourth International Conference of New and Restored Democracies in Cotonou, Benin (4 December 2000)

SERVICE LINE: DECENTRALISATION, LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND URBAN/RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Traditional courts like this one resolve most local disputes in Bangladesh. (Photo: Munira Morshed Munni/UNDP)

Through this service line, UNDP addresses policy reforms through development planning, promotes effective legal frameworks and plans for mobilising resources to the regional and local level. In addition, UNDP builds partnerships between civil society and local government and supports self-organisation by the poor. UNDP has developed its LIFE Programme (with support from Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden), the Decentralised Governance Programme (funded by Finland, Sweden and Germany) and the Urban Management Programme (sponsored by Switzerland, Canada, The United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and Italy). Services in this area include:

- **Promoting the decentralisation of authority and responsibility** to provincial, district, city/town and village levels including through constitutional and legal reform;
- **Support for national decentralisation strategies**, including fiscal, administrative and political dimensions, with an emphasis on the rights of women and the poor;
- **Improving coordination between key national ministries** to ensure coherence between sectoral decentralisation, local planning and budgetary mechanisms;

- **Strengthening the capacity of citizen's groups and local authorities** to promote urban/rural linkages, advocate for devolution of responsibility and negotiate for better interaction among all levels;
- **Strengthening sub-national electoral, legislative and judicial processes**, including training for local elected and non-elected (including traditional) leaders;
- **Promoting a legal and institutional environment at the local level** to enable participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups as well as accountability and transparency. This includes training local actors through the establishment of on-campus and on-line courses in schools and universities;
- **Promoting responsive local citizenship** through civic education, improved access to information and support for alliances of the poor and other local partnerships;

“Democracy can only work if all groups in a society feel that they belong to it, and that it belongs to them. Often, that means ensuring, one way or other, that minorities are given a permanent share of power. In some places, that can be done by decentralisation, so that national minorities can win local power, in regions where they form the local majority.”

**Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations,
Address to the Fourth International Conference of New and Restored Democracies in Cotonou, Benin (4 December 2000)**

- **Improving the enabling legal and regulatory environment for civil society organisations** and municipal administrations to promote participatory urban and rural development based on international best practices; and
- **Assisting local needs-based planning and participatory budgeting processes**, especially to steer human development processes to the most vulnerable groups.

VIRTUAL FAIR TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN LATIN AMERICA

The DGTTF contributed to a pilot high-tech programme to create a “virtual fair to strengthen local governance in Latin America.” With participation of 15 countries, the project worked with local government, businesses and civil society partners to establish a specialised website to systemise, codify and document local experiences for fostering democratic governance. This experience has proven innovative in the creation of new modalities for knowledge capturing, codification and dissemination. Some of the outputs include a map of best practices, actors and lessons learned, with 300 experiences identified; a guide to access local governance conditions and assistance in formulating recommendations to improve local governance conditions in order to enhance the political viability of development projects.

Decentralisation and local governance is one of the areas of greatest support for the DGTTF, reflecting the rising interest in this area of governance.

SERVICE LINE: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM AND ANTI-CORRUPTION

Through this service line, UNDP aims at increasing efficiency and equity in the delivery of public services, strengthening accountability and transparency through development and implementation of anti-corruption legislation and policies, and building capacity of independent oversight and monitoring mechanisms.

In the area of accountability, transparency and anti-corruption, UNDP has been able to channel resources from the governments of Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany to programme countries through the Programme for Accountability and Transparency (PACT) since 1995. Since 2000, the work of PACT has been aligned to the corporate priorities and service lines as currently reflected in the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund.

Specific activities include:

- **Promoting a professional, merit-based and neutral civil service** through the adoption of performance management-based systems that promote objective criteria in hiring and promotion; equal opportunity for women and minority groups, reform wage and incentive structures;

DGTF projects seek to strengthen an efficient and accountable public sector, promote accountability and transparency of anti-corruption legislation and policies, build capacity of independent oversight and monitoring mechanisms and increase efficiency and equity in the delivery of public services.

- **Functional reviews in public administrative reform.** This includes strategic activities to help promote ownership of reform and proposing of comparative examples for strategic policy and reform choices. Support activities aim to balance the goals of right-sizing civil service with efficiency and effectiveness gains;
- **Strengthening accountability and transparency** through the development and implementation of anti-corruption legislation and policies, and through independent mechanisms for oversight, monitoring and enforcement, such as the Ombudsman, while working with CSOs on advocacy and monitoring.
- **Training of civil servants** about best practices for effectively delivering public services to the people and especially to women and the poor;
- **Promoting the use of Information and Communications Technology** to enhance the effectiveness, openness and the accessibility of public sector services; and
- **Supporting global advocacy, capacity building, knowledge networking and tools development in the area of anti-corruption, transparency and accountability.**

FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN MOZAMBIQUE AND MOLDOVA

DGTTF projects in both Mozambique and Moldova focused on anti-corruption. In Mozambique, a national forum for transparency and accountability in the public sector was established, involving the government, the public and the media. It was to meet every two weeks and also to provide training for journalists. This National Forum was aligned through memoranda of understanding with the Criminal Investigation Police and the Judicial Training Centre.

The Moldova project helped strengthen national capacities to fight corruption in conjunction with the national chapter of the NGO Transparency International. Both projects have built on UNDP's comparative advantage in being able to team up with both the government and civil society in a politically sensitive area, have raised the issue of anti-corruption to the highest political levels and involved civil society in those anti-corruption targeted efforts.

PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS

With the transformation of UNDP under the Administrator's Business Plan, UNDP is beginning to deliver knowledge-based advisory services and becoming a "knowledge organisation." At its Executive Board session of June 2003, this new concept was launched as "UNDP Knowledge Services."

In the democratic governance area, knowledge services are provided through three mechanisms:

- The democratic governance "**knowledge network**," which functions as a global community of 750 practitioners having a shared interest and professional focus;
- The geographically organised **Sub-Regional Resource Facilities** (SURFs), where Governance advisers assist the specific Governance clusters of country offices, and have advisory and research capacity to address substantive issues in greater depth; and
- The **Global Thematic Facility on Democratic Governance** (Oslo Governance Centre). Based in Oslo, Norway, the centre was established to enhance programme activities and the advisory role of UNDP in the area of democratic governance. The Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) assists UNDP country offices in their cooperation with governments and their partners, civil society

organisations and people in developing countries. Its objective is to support countries in implementing democratic reforms necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Centre has a special focus and competency in the areas of access to justice, human rights, civil society and conflict prevention.

Taken together, the knowledge services provided by the networks, the SURFs and the OGC include:

- **Policy advice and tools for efficient implementation** on specific democratic governance issues and challenges, so that decisions made can be based on the best available information on the design, formulation, specifications and projected outcomes of a given solution;
- **Knowledge building** through UNDP's knowledge networks by continually distilling and analysing information, lessons learned, comparative experiences and success stories, and turning such information into more valuable sources of development knowledge. These networks facilitate dialogue, promote collaboration and mutual support among professionals, and encourage innovation and new ideas;
- **Referrals to democratic governance experts** (within SURFs or at the Oslo Governance Centre) and trusted consultants who can be called on for more focused input to a particular development initiative, enabling a client to choose from a range of professionals who are familiar with the issues and the region, and who have been vetted in advance; and
- **Advocacy, outreach and partnership** to obtain the latest ideas, trends and insights in democratic governance from the United Nations system, bilateral or multilateral donor agencies, academic institutions, think-tanks, civil society and the private sector.

OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE DGTTF

UNDP has established the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund to support UNDP's Governance activities in programme countries by making additional funds available where core resources are lacking and non-core resources may not be easily available at the country level. The resources channeled through the fund support the UNDP Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF), which provides a frame of reference for UNDP's strategic goals and the resources required to achieve these goals. The MYFF is approved by the Executive Board and includes democratic governance as one of the priority goals of the organisation.

The Thematic Trust Fund is a new, more flexible and responsive co-financing modality, designed specifically for rapid approval and swift disbursement of funds at the country level. Some of the features of this modality include:

- **Flexible contribution modalities.** Donors are offered the flexibility of contributing funds to the Thematic Trust Fund in a manner that the use of their funds is specified not only for the broader democratic governance strategy theme, but also for specific service lines, regions, countries, or any combination thereof.
- **Funding distribution based on priorities.** In line with UNDP's established priorities and mandate, as well as the MYFF, the general distribution of resources under the Trust Fund focuses on Low Income Countries (LICs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Africa Region, while a proportion of the resources are used to fund global and regional initiatives.

While the above criteria are indicative for the general distribution of Trust Fund resources, donor contributions with specific earmarking are accommodated, i.e. New Zealand's contribution earmarked for democratic governance in the Pacific Island States or Germany and Italy's contributions to the electoral process in Afghanistan.

- **Rapid disbursement and implementation.** Programme countries are able to access Trust Fund resources through a simplified and short process, lasting less than ten weeks. In the interest of ensuring rapid disbursement, funding requests channeled through UNDP country offices are received as a short-format proposal and acted upon on a fast-track basis.

Focusing on priority countries as indicated above, and under the general resource distribution and/or donor earmarking criteria, individual programme country requests are considered towards the end of the year, in the annual editions of the Trust Fund. Disbursement starts on 1 January of each year. Alignment is guaranteed through the necessary consistency of funded proposals and service lines.

- **Management of the Thematic Trust Fund.** The management of the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund is the responsibility of the Bureau for Development Policy in UNDP. BDP has the responsibility for management, oversight and policy design, reporting, substantive backstopping and implementation support.

A Standing Committee of UNDP's policy board in charge of the democratic governance practice ensures broad representation of UNDP's Regional Bureaux, and thereby consistent regional alignment and balance, in the decision-making process, regarding service line development, allocation criteria and reporting arrangements.

- **Detailed financial and activity reporting.** On an annual basis, UNDP reports to donors on the use of resources under the Trust Fund. Such reporting includes a certified financial statement on income and expenditure, as well as a narrative activity report. Donor reports may reflect a breakdown of activities and expenditure by service line, region and country. Interim financial reports may also be provided on a quarterly basis.

On the activity side, narrative reports are printed for distribution to donors and other development partners at large. The reports reflect the results of activities financed through the Trust Fund, as well as planned initiatives and progress towards intended outcomes. They also provide a general overview of activities in addition to details by country and service line, as well as financial information.

The reporting mechanism is linked to UNDP's corporate planning and reporting scheme, namely the *Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR)* and the Strategic Results Framework (SRF).

- **Monitoring and evaluation.** Established UNDP procedures for review, monitoring and evaluation are applicable to Trust Fund activities.

While the approval of proposals is expeditious, accountability for funds received is ensured through rigorous post-hoc reporting requirements and standard UNDP auditing procedures.

- **Funds administration.** In accordance with UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules and procedures, UNDP charges an amount of 5 percent to contributions to the Democratic Governance Trust Fund to cover the costs for administration and related services.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DGTF GLOBAL WINDOW, 2001–2003 (USD)

Donor	Timing of contributions	Total
Norway	Three tranches: 6.6 million in July 2001, 8.5 million in July 2002, and 9.2 million in July 2003	24.3 million
The Netherlands	Three tranches: 2.27 million in November 2001, 4.31 million in August 2002, and 2.2 million in April 2003	8.8 million
Italy	Two tranches: 2.4 million and 0.6 million in April 2004	3 million
Germany	One tranche in August 2002	1 million
Finland	One tranche in 2001	0.3 million
Total		37.4 million



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